

Freiburg Passion Play. '11

A moving picture of the life of Christ, taken at Freiburg, Germany, ~~of the Passion Play~~ as acted by ^{the} natives of Freiburg ~~for~~ periodically for several hundred years, following the Scripture closely throughout and depicting in detail the betrayal of Christ by Judas Iscariot.

The Passion Play.

The oldest Passion Play in the world, presented last night at Washington's newest theater, precluded its showing with the statement that the great figures of the tragedy have been personated down the centuries by the villagers of Freiburg since the year 1264—30 years before the first production of the sacred drama of Oberammergau.

"Tannhauser," played by a symphonic orchestra, was followed by the vested choir of the Church of the Covenant, that appeared, singing, from the front of the house, then down the aisles and across the stage, vanishing behind the wings. It was a devout preliminary. When the

lights were lowered an interpreter appeared at one far end of the stage, his face made visible by tiny lights on either side, and read from sheets of paper an explanation of the action of the play. The Auditorium is a vast place, as Washington theaters go, and as the evening was being generally given over to the celebration of Washington's birthday, the audience, smaller than it is likely to be again throughout the engagement, sat in large groups throughout the orchestra and obviously failed to hear an explanation that seemed somewhat unnecessary since the program's announcement was illuminating, and it is not likely that any one needed to be enlightened as to the history of the crucifixion.

The first several scenes depicted the village of Oberammergau; the gathering of travelers for the play, and like incidents. The interest then was directed to Freiburg and the great story of humanity was given with a forceful simplicity that needed no elaborate stage to add to the grandeur of the greatest story ever told.

Two outstanding figures, the Christ and Judas, were personated by two brothers, George and George Fasbender. It was explained, could there be a long line of forbears who have been similarly honored. The white-robed Savior bears what one might call a family likeness to the Christ of sacred art. And his sad face and meek mien as he stands before Pilate to be judged is a picture of anguished realism. Judas, in his last hour of remorse, reveals a genius astonishing in an actor whose only training has been in this one production.

The fact that Dimitri Buchowetzki is the director of the spectacle gives assurance as to the massing of crowds and other dramatic details of the ancient play.

FEB 26 1925

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